

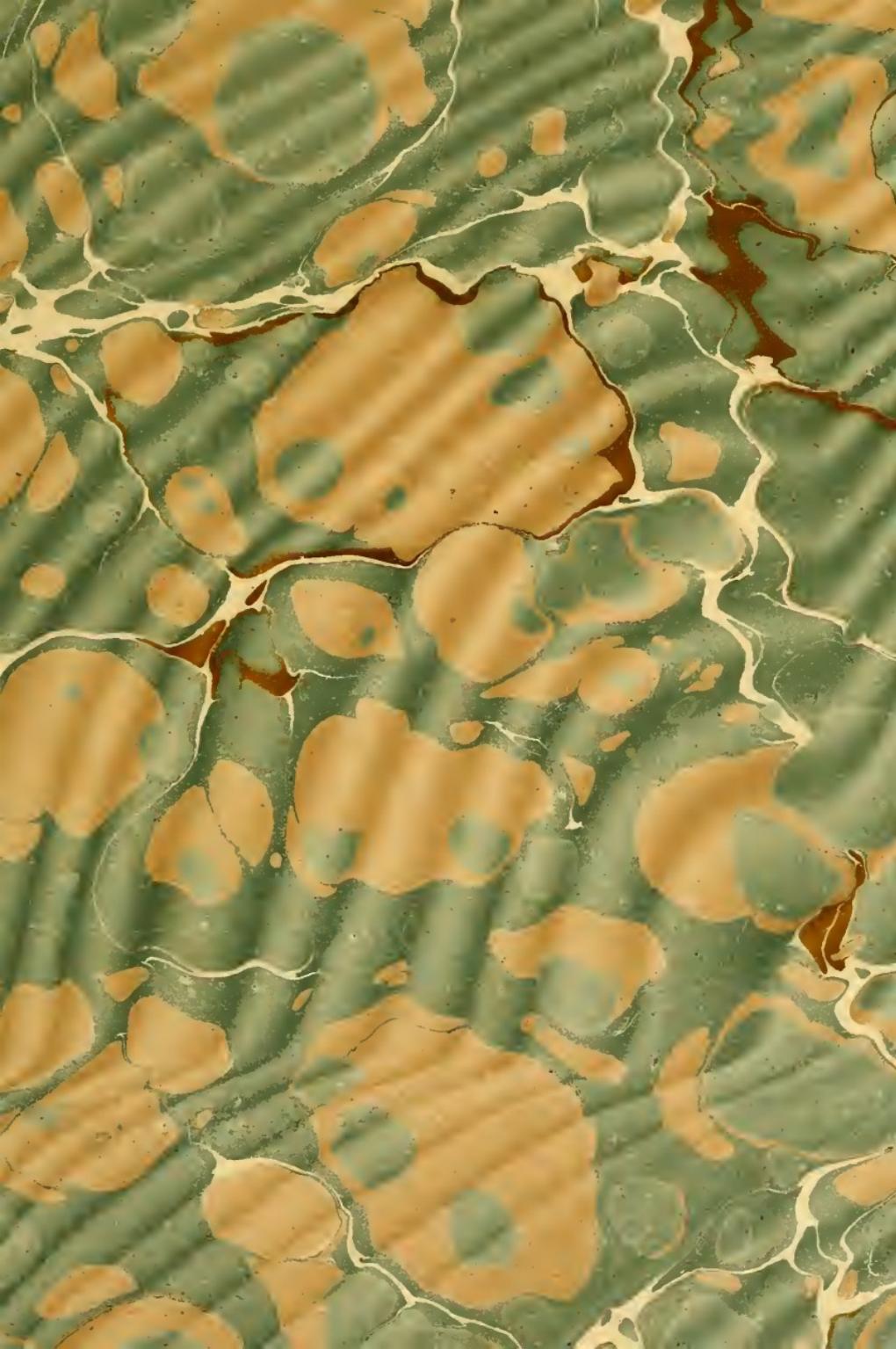
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A JOURNEY ON HORSEBACK

THROUGH THE

GREAT WEST,

IN 1825.

BY CHESTER A. LOOMIS.

Visiting Allegany Towns, Olean, Warren, Franklin, Pittsburg, New Lisbon  
Elyria, Norfalk, Columbus, Zanesville, Vermillion, Kaskaskia,  
Vandalia, Sandusky, and many other places.

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## THE NOTES OF A JOURNEY TO THE GREAT WEST IN 1825

By Chester Loomis, of Rushville, Ontario Co., N. Y.

THE START — ALLEGANY COUNTY — OLEAN  
THE INDIAN RESERVATION — WARREN  
— OIL CREEK — FRANKLIN, PA. —  
MILITIA DRILL.

### CHAPTER I.

A spirit of emigration to the western states and territories which has for many years extensively prevailed in most of the eastern states, and in some degree in the immediate vicinity where I have resided, together with the various and contradictory accounts published or written, relative to the western country, had excited an ardent desire to ascertain from personal observation, the general character, and prospects of that extensive section of country, embraced within the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

In the summer of 1825 an opportunity was presented of engaging in the transaction of some business in the state of

Illinois, and I determined to avail myself of it, in exploring such portions of the country as circumstances might enable me to visit. Accordingly, on the first day of June, I commenced my journey from Rushville, N. Y., and reached Olean, on the Allegany, on the third, without meeting with anything particularly worthy of observation. A general appearance of improvement is apparent in most of the towns through which I passed. And although the soil of the land is cold and moist, it seems to be productive. Olean, Almond, Alfred, Angelica and Friendship, are gradually becoming settled with industrious emigrants. In Friendship, particularly, is seen a spirit of enterprise and improvement which must render that place the seat of business and commerce for a considerable district of country. Olean, on the Allegany river, is apparently on the decay. This village appears desolate and lonely. Its numerous empty tenements are falling to ruin, and unless the current of emigration from the eastern states should again take this course to the western country, the anticipations of many well informed persons, relative to the future importance of this place will never be realized.

The road from Olean down the Allegany river is impassable with wagons as far as Big Valley Creek; it being most of the way a mere Indian path, blocked up with fallen trees, and is entirely uninhabited except by Indians. The whole distance is a continued forest of valuable pine timber, generally of large size. The undergrowth of timber is hemlock, and left to the course of nature undisturbed by the hand of man, a forest of hemlock will succeed that of pine, which now

covers the country. I have found it difficult to assign any satisfactory cause for this change. The present growth is exclusively pine—the next will be exclusively hemlock. Does this prove any change in the seasons from their former state? Or is the change of timber produced by other causes?

Big Valley Creek is a small stream barely sufficient for mills, and is at this time very low. A man named Howe, formerly of Phelps, Ontario county, now resides here. Several drunken Indians were at his house, in which they appeared to be as familiar as in their own wigwams. Howe has a handsome and interesting daughter, about 16 or 17 years of age, who was talking, joking, laughing and dallying with some of the young Indians in the true and genuine spirit and style of coquetry.

The Indians are settled along both sides of the Allegany river for the distance of fifty miles below Olean. They own a reservation of forty miles in length and one mile in width, the river being the center. Many of them now devote their attention to agricultural pursuits, and the squaws are seen industriously engaged at labor, while the Indians spend their time in idleness and dissipation. Their houses or cabins exhibit in a considerable degree an appearance of civilized life. They are mostly constructed of hewed pine logs, have well-built stone chimneys, glass windows, have good floors, and roofs covered with pine shingles.

About thirty miles below Olean I observed several thousand acres of land in one body, perfectly flat and level, smooth upon its surface, without a hill

or a stone, and covered with a thick growth of scrubby, knotty, crooked, low pines, all of about equal size—say two feet in diameter. The land appears to be allured, but is of such elevation that the river cannot have formed it by depositing the sediment of its floods. I can conceive of but one rational method of accounting for its appearance and singular growth of timber, so different from all the surrounding country, and that is by supposing that at some former period this land must have been cleared and cultivated and that from some unknown cause its cultivation was discontinued, and the forest of scrubby pines which now cover this tract spontaneously commenced its growth.

On the 5th, I crossed the state line into Pennsylvania, 40 miles below Olean. In the course of the same day I ascended a high, barren, and rocky mountain on the summit of which I found ripe strawberries of a large size. Upon the highest and most elevated point is a huge flat rock from under which a fine spring of clear cold water issues. On this rock is inscribed the names of some hundred travelers who have at different times been refreshed by the waters which flow from beneath it.

This whole mountain seems to be composed of rock, excepting in spots, a rich, but shallow layer of soil. And its rocks and stones, with few exceptions, are composed of small pebble stones of every kind and color, cemented together by the hand of nature, resembling those pebbles which may be found at the shores of most of the large lakes of this country, where they have been washed

and worn by the waves of a thousand years. Can it be possible that at some distant period this entire mountain was a mass of small pebble stones, loose, unconnected, promiscuously mixed, of all sorts, and subjected to the continued action of water for centuries?

On the western side of this mountain flows the Connewango river. It is here several rods in width and so deep as to be forded with difficulty.

The village of Warren, Pa., is situated on its western bank. Warren is the capital of a county of the same name, and contains 50 or 60 ordinary houses.

June 6th, I crossed the Brokenstraw river. This stream is smaller than the Connewango. About 30 miles from the Brokenstraw is Oil Creek, so named on account of certain springs upon its margin, from which arises the genuine Seneca Oil. This oil is collected by the inhabitants in considerable quantities. Much of the country in this quarter is broken and mountainous. The hills are rocky and barren, with shrubby oaks and laurel, thinly scattered over their sides. Innumerable springs of fine water flow from the hills, and in the valleys which separate the highlands are some flourishing settlements.

The village of Franklin at the junction of French Creek with the Allegany, is handsomely situated, and is the capital of Nernango county, Pa. It is an ancient settlement; has a stone Court House and jail, 60 or 70 houses, four taverns and as many stores. It is apparent however, that very little industry prevails here. Extensive fields of fine land are open commons, and there are

few indications of enterprise or active business in the place. A toll bridge is erected here over French Creek.

On the day of my arrival at Franklin, four companies of militia had assembled at that place for exercise, commanded by Col. Mags, who is an active officer and a member of the Pennsylvania Legislature. He was, in fact, the only officer uniformed, or who made a good military appearance, on the ground. The soldiers were awkward and undisciplined, ragged and dirty. About one-fifth part were armed with rifles; the remainder carried sticks, canes, umbrellas, or cornstalks. In the afternoon soon after whiskey had been circulated freely, and the men were dismissed from parade, a battle royal was commenced in the street among these redoubtable heroes and for near a quarter of an hour twenty or thirty men were boxing and as many more were clinched, choking, biting; gouging, and tearing off each others clothes. At length the spirit of the fight subsided, the storm ceased, order was restored, and the mob dispersed.

## CHAPTER II.

OHIO—ANTIENT MOUNDS—PRICE OF LAND

—ZANESVILLE—AN OLD FORT—AN  
ABORIGINAL EMPIRE—A CYCLONE.

On the 8th, of June I continued my journey from Franklin through the village of Mercer, in the county of Mercer, Pa., to Newcastle, on the Chenango river, and on the next day entered the state of Ohio, directing my course for the Big Beaver, which falls into the Ohio river below Pittsburgh. The country is moderately hilly, and is well watered; the timber principally oak, and a soil of light color, somewhat inclining to clay. Fine fields of grain are seen in this section, and more industry and enterprise is observable than I had seen after leaving the state of New York.

Near New Castle I observed several mounds, evidently artificial, but of very ancient formation. They are of a round, oval form—from two to three rods in diameter, and perhaps ten feet high.

These mounds are found near the center of extensive plains. They are composed of sand and a white colored kind of marble, bearing some resemblance to the organic remains of animals, particularly of bones in a state of decomposition.

The lands in the county of Columbiana, Ohio, are hilly and rolling. New Lisbon, its capital, has a population equal to that of Geneva, and is a place of some business. The hills in the neighborhood of the village are filled with stone, coal and iron ore is abundant. A furnace here makes good castings.

On the 10th inst. I reached Sindy-

hille, in Tuscarawas county. This place is situated on the Big Sandy River. Fifteen miles west of New Lisbon I left the hilly rolling country. Elevated plains extending many miles on a perfect level then succeed—and the face of the country generally is very different from any I had hitherto seen. The soil here is sandy, but certainly rich and productive. Price of unimproved land from \$1.25, to \$2.00, per acre.

Oak is the prevailing timber, but black walnut, maple and ash, are occasionally interpersed. This section of country has a scattered population. Little industry is observable. Some fine fields of corn are seen, and in many places the women are engaged in hoeing them.

New Philadelphia is the capital of Tuscarawas county, and has perhaps, 100 houses—few of them elegant. It stands on a beautiful plain, near Tuscarawa river. Coal, limestone, iron ore, and freestone, are found near this place. This village, and indeed most of the villages in this state, exhibit but little enterprize or business. I have been particularly surprised in finding most of the adjacent lands unenclosed and remaining open commons. Here scarcely an enclosed field, or even garden is to be seen.

On the banks of the Big Sandy river I noticed several beech trees of most astonishing size—nearly equal in magnitude to the largest oaks in Ontario county, New York.

On the 11th, I followed the course of the Big Sandy, repeatedly crossing it by fording as the water was low.

The general aspect of the country is pleasant. Its soil is rich and fertile.

For the last 50 miles which I have travelled the country is level, and both the open plains and heavy timbered bottom lands, seem to be alluvial. The price of produce here is low; wheat 34 cents, corn 20 cents, and rye 20 cents per bushel. Immense quantities of un-threshed grain in stacks, are seen, and cash seems to be extremely scarce throughout this section of country.

From the 12th, to the 16th, of June I continued my journey through a fine country. The afternoon of the 12<sup>th</sup>, was spent at Zanesville, a large, rich and populous village on the east bank of the Muskingum river and directly opposite to the junction formed at this place of the Licking and Muskingum rivers.

Zanesville is a place of some business. It is a manufacturing town of considerable wealth. Some elegant and costly buildings, and a population of 6000 inhabitants.

About 70 or 80 run of mill-stones are in operation here, and great quantities of flour are annually manufactured. Situated in the heart of one of the finest grain countries in the world, Zanesville has peculiar local advantages, and there is evidently more enterprise and industry among the inhabitants than at any other place nearer than Pittsburg. Stone, coal and iron ore abound in the vicinity.

The state of morals is rather low. On Sunday numerous parties of gentlemen and ladies of the higher class of population were making excursions in the neighborhood, while the lower orders were collected in considerable numbers at the groceries and grog shops near the river.

A portion of the population of this place is Roman Catholic. At this time

a large and splendid brick building is erecting for a chapel. Towards the expense of this "*His Holiness, the Pope of Rome,*" has contributed the sum of \$20,000, thus showing that he is not unmindful of the interests of the "*Holy Mother Church*" even in the new, but growing countries of the west.

On the 13th, of June I passed through the villages of "*Falls of' Licking,*" Irville, Newark and Granville, to Johnstown, in Licking county, Ohio. The Licking river, up which I traveled most of the day, is a stream of clear water when compared with the other rivers of this country. It has most extensive black walnut bottoms, beautiful soil and situation.

Near Newark are the remains of numerous ancient works and fortifications. That of most remarkable form, and mathematical regularity, which I saw is a mile from the village. Its form is that of a regular Octagon, all the sides being by actual measurement, exactly equal. The walls are more than three feet high. At one of angles, was evidently the gate or opening, opposite to which, within, is the ruins of a raised work on each side and extending some rods within in the form of a parallelogram - its walls higher and terminating within in two mounds which now have an elevation of ten feet and overlook the surrounding walls. These were once ports for sentinels, out of the reach of arrows from the outer walls. From the out angle or opening two parallel walls, ten rods apart, extend in a due north direction, about twenty or thirty rods to another ancient work of true circular form, with walls from three to five feet high. In the center of this

circle is another mound of equal elevation with those already spoken of. Upon digging into one of these mounds I found first, great quantities of calcined bones, arrow heads of flint, a stone axe, pieces of broken earthen, resembling stoneware, coals, and ashes. I traced the walls of this circle and found but one gate or opening, and from the height of the embankments, this was evidently once a covered way for a considerable distance. It led to a fine spring of water. At regular distances along this covered way on each side were large and high platforms,—say six rods apart—unquestionably designed for defensive ports. Both the Octagon and circle contain, as I should judge, about an equal area—perhaps 20 acres each—now covered, even the walls with the greatest growth of forest trees,—black walnut, blue ash, maple and oak, which have evidently succeeded several former generations of timber, if the expression may be allowed, of equal magnitude and age. The Licking river once flowed near these works—its present channel is more than a mile distant.

Near Granville, in the center of an extensive plain or prairie, I saw a mound of a true circular form of an elevation exceeding 20 feet. It is composed of a light colored marble, very different in color and appearance from the soil of the adjacent lands, which seem to be composed of a dark colored alluvial soil. This mound is undoubtedly an artificial work, but it cannot have been scooped up from the surrounding earth, as the contiguous land is entirely level to its base. Indeed, through a great extent of country here, every mile exhibits

evident traces of an immense ancient population. Who can say that this has not been the seat of some mighty empire? Who after seeing these wonderful memorials of former ages, will affirm that some mighty Greece or Rome of the western world, has not flourished here? Who will declare that here the human mind did not, many thousand years since burst the bands of barbarism and ignorance, and exert itself in the noblest efforts of genius or of patriotism?—in taming the ferocity of barbarism, in organizing society, and inventing and sustaining many valuable arts of civilized life—and probably many to which even the present generation of civilized men are strangers!

In the town of Hartford, I noticed a Beaver dam of greater size and strength than I have hitherto seen. It runs from bank to bank, across a small but I presume, durable stream, circular in its form, six rods in length, ten feet in width and three feet high,—so constructed as to flow 50 or 60 acres. It is an ancient work, but the marsh or pond favored by it is said still to be the residence of beaver.

On the 14th, of June, about six miles north of Johnstown I crossed the track or course of a tornado, which swept across this state in an easterly direction on the 18th. ult. It seems to have passed with a more irresistible force than any wind I ever witnessed.

The vein or current at this place was probably more than a mile in width, prostrating in its course every thing with which it came in contact. Trees, houses, barns and fences, were equally swept away. The thickest forests of this country appear to have formed no

obstacle to its force. All was levelled, and I remarked, 'that the edges or outside lines of this tornado are well-defined and distinctly marked; every tree in the southern part of the course was prostrated to the north; every tree on its northerd side was prostrated to the south, and in the center they seem to have been whirled in all directions but mostly to the east.' Scarce a vestage of the village of Burlington, near this, can now be found—a village composed of about 40 hewed log buildings, all of which were razed to their foundations and their timbers promiscuously mingled with the prostrated trees of the surrounding forests. Several of the inhabitants were killed, and a general and total destruction of every species of property within the course of the wind was experienced. This hurricane is said to have commenced in the state of Indiana—to have sweep'd across the state of Ohio, and to have spent itself among the mountains on the eastern side of the Allegany river, in the state of Pennsylvania—an extent of more than 400 miles.

On the 15th, of June I reached Bloomfield, in the county of Knox. This is a new, and mostly an unsettled country here, but in point of fertility, is not surpassed by any part of this state of equal extent. The general face of the country is level. It is here, however, sufficiently rolling or undulating to give a brisk current to the streams. Is extremely well watered with durable springs of fine water. It has a deep rich and productive soil, slightly mixed with black sand, although it seems to be composed of vegetable decomposition, principally to the depth of two or three feet. A great proportion of the timber

for many miles is black walnut, ash, maple, and oak. The woods are entangled with an immense growth of wild grape vine. The underbrush is principally paw-paw. Price of land here is from \$1.25 to \$2.00 per acre. This tract is about 20 or 30 miles distant from the route of the Ohio canal.

### CHAPTER III.

#### COLUMBUS.

On the 16th, of June I arrived at Columbus, the seat of Government of the state of Ohio. This place, which is of recent growth, is beautifully situated upon an elevated prairie of several hundred acres, on the east bank of the Sciota river. Its public buildings are of brick, and appear to good advantage. The number of houses is said to be 400, —some of them are elegant. On the east side of the town two large springs issue and discharge themselves into the river; one on the south and the other on the north side. The river here I should judge to be 12 or 16 rods in width, and is navigable for boats of 10 or 15 tons at all seasons. A ferry is established at this place.

Franklin, on the west bank of the Sciota, is one of the oldest settlements in the state. It is a small village, and seems not to be increasing.

The alluvial flats on the western border of the Sciota are rich, fertile and extensive. Here are extensive corn plantations. In traveling westward from Columbus on the 17th, and 18th, of June, nothing worthy of particular observation was noticed. Charleston is in Clark county, to which place I traveled via, London. These are both small villages in a fertile, but unhealthy part of country. At Charleston I observed a saw mill constructed with an inclined wheel and carried by the weight of six oxen. In this quarter are several large prairies.

The population of this part of Ohio seems to be principally collected in little villages, and as the fertility of the soil is

such as to yield great crops with little labor, but little labor appears to be done. June 19th, I passed through Springfield to Troy, in Miami county. Springfield is a handsome and flourishing village, situated near the junction of Mad river and Buck creek. I know not why this stream is denominated "Mad river," unless it is on account of its running with a brisk perceptible current, a circumstance so singular among the rivers of this country that the inhabitants infer from it the "madness of its waters."

On the 20th, of June I reached Greenville, near the western line of Ohio. Greenville is celebrated as the encampment of the American Army for a considerable period during the war with the western Indians in 1793—4, and by the treaty of Peace which was here concluded with them by General Wayne. It is not a village, but has the name of one. Its situation is pleasant and beautiful on the eastern bank of Greenville creek. Some fine springs of water issue from the earth nearly on a level with the plain. During the afternoon of the 20th, I crossed the state line, and entered the state of Indiana.

#### INDIANA.

The road by which I entered this state is that which leads from Greenville to Indianapolis, the seat of State Government. The state line is ten miles west of Greenville. Here for the first time since I have been on this journey I found some difficulty in obtaining shelter and entertainment for the night. The country is new, has few inhabitants, and those few generally poor and without accommodations for travelers.

June 21st, passed through Winchester,

20 miles west of Greenville. It is the capital of Randolph county. This village consists of three log cabins and a log hovel. Near this place in a field, without cover or enclosure I saw a grist mill constructed with a large horizontal wheel, with perpendicular shaft—a strap or rope passing from the wheel around the spindle of the mill stone. The mill stone was placed in a hollow birch tub, and was 19 inches in diameter. The strength of one horse put the mill in operation, and it appeared to grind corn and rye well.

During the greater part of this day I have traveled on the banks of White river. The country continues level. Prairies of some extent are found on the extensive bottoms of this stream. They are covered with a vegetation which from its surprising growth indicates a strength, richness and fertility of soil, unexampled and unknown in New York. The great body of lands in this quarter yet belong to the Government. Its price of course is \$1.25 per acre. A few scattered habitations only are seen, and it is generally from six to ten miles between settlements and from the dead and stagnant waters and the immense growth of vegetation, an unwholesome atmosphere must exist during the heats of summer and autumn.

On the 22nd, of June I continued to follow the course of the White river until I reached Strawtown. The waters of this stream are clear, notwithstanding its sluggish current, and in passing along its banks immense numbers of large fish are seen swimming in its waters. At Strawtown is an Indian settlement. Here too are the last white inhabitants this

side of Crawfordsville, more than 60 miles distant from this place.

In the afternoon I passed Strawtown, and entered the forest by an indistinct trace or path running nearly a westerly course, and at evening encamped on the banks of a small stream called Hinkle's creek, about ten or twelve miles from Strawton. Here for the first time on this journey we made the earth our bed, and the heavens our covering. In the course of the night a thunder shower passed over, but fortunately for us, it rained but little. Vivid and frequent flashes of lightning and loud and appalling peals of thunder, added to the impressions of gloom, with which we contemplated the surrounding forest. The morning of the 23rd, of June was lowering and hazy. A grizzling rain rendered traveling extremely disagreeable. The weather was excessively warm. Astonishing numbers of flies assailed our horses in addition to which the constant succession of marshes and swamps through the deep mire of which they were compelled to go, rendered our progress tedious and embarrassing.

In the afternoon of the twenty-third of June, a most tremendous thunder storm arose. The day had been cloudy, with occasional slight showers of rain, and the close and oppressive heat of the atmosphere, indicated that it was highly charged with the electric fluid. About noon the distant, but continual roll of thunder was heard low in the western horizon, and for two hours the clouds seemed to remain stationary except in extending around to the south and north. Not a breath of air seemed in motion. A fearful stillness pervaded the wilderness, and as the cloud arose

the gloom and darkness of evening twilight spread around and gave rise to the most appalling apprehensions. The clouds at length suddenly closed around the horizon, and in a few moments the fury of the storm burst upon us. The wind biew with great force. Hail and rain descended with remarkable violence. Frequent and extremely vivid streams of lightning flashed around us; but the loud roll of thunder was no longer heard, as the din of wind, rain and hail was overwhelming.

The violence of the wind was of short duration and the hail ceased after a few minutes; but the rain fell in torrents for an hour. It was impossible to find the least shelter. We had made up our minds to meet the horrors of the storm with as much calmness and fortitude as we could command. We made no halt nor did we dismount during its utmost violence, and while trees and limbs of trees were falling around we rode slowly forward. A large oak tree was shattered by the electric fluid, a few rods from us. But we escaped uninjured, except being thoroughly drenched with rain.

We continued to press forward through mud and mire, without a dry thread of clothes upon us, for the remainder of the day; near the close of which we reached Shorntown, an Indian settlement twenty miles distant from Crawfordsville. As it was impossible to reach any habitation of civilized men, we were compelled to submit to such accommodations as could be obtained from these miserable savages. After going from hut to hut, endeavoring to obtain shelter and refreshment among them, without being able to make them

comprehend our wants, or if they did understand, without their regarding them for some time, we at length found a Frenchman, *half savage, half civilized*, who was dressed in the Indian costume, and lived among them—to whom we addressed ourselves. He replied to us at first in a language, not one word of which was understood, at the same time using significant gestures, and pointing to different and opposite points of the compass at the same time. Crowds of Indians, of all ages and sexes, gathered around. The scene was certainly a fine one for the pencil of a Hogarth, to pourtray. The unintelligible jargon, the strange and unaccountable gesticulations of the Indians, the merriment and laughter created among them by our embarrassment tended to produce vexation and disgust in our minds. We cursed them heartily as an inhospitable race, and was about to leave their lodge to seek a shelter again in the wilderness when the Frenchman before alluded to, rose and beckoned us to follow him. We now found he could speak broken English. He conducted us to a wigwam, 80 or a 100 rods distant from the main village, built a fire, fed our horses, and prepared supper for ourselves. Our supper was cooked in Indian style, but hunger and fatigue gave an appetite which was by no means scrupulous.

We were permitted to lodge upon the floor in front of the fire. Several Indians lodged in the same wigwam; but they behaved civilly. In the morning we attempted to partake of a breakfast prepared, but the offensive quality of their viands, together with the nauseous cookery, prevented more than tasting.

These Indians are of the Miami tribe. They are said to be extremely dissipated. Scarce a month passes in which they do not have a general drunken powow. On such occasions murders are very common. A few months since, while the men and women of this lodge were in a state of general intoxication, an Indian of the tribe who had drank sufficiently to render him mischievous, with his knife cut off the noses of seventeen of their principal warriors. We here noticed several of the number thus singularly mutilated. The appearance of the Indians of this tribe is not inviting. They appear to be, almost without exception, an ill-favored, nasty, greasy race,—idle, dissolute, and intemperate. Their situation is upon a prairie of several thousand acres. The land is rich, fertile and beautiful—and they have a few enclosed fields of corn,—and large numbers of their horses feed in droves upon the prairie. I believe they do not raise cattle, or indeed any kind of stock except horses. The Indians of this tribe are in the habit of selling their young women, like the Creole mothers of New Orleans. The price for one of them, when a permanent connection is intended, is a *horse*, no difference of terms ever being made on account of personal beauty.

June 24th, we reached the habitations of white inhabitants, after traveling most of the day through an open prairie country, and directing our course nearly west from Shorntown. We no longer find highways or roads distinctly marked and opened. The only roads are the ancient paths or traces of the Indians. These are in many places so indistinct and obscure, that we find it difficult to

pursue them. Wild game is plentiful in this country. We, this day, saw an elk and several deer, besides immense numbers of wild turkeys and prairie hens.

In this section of country few inhabitants are found, and those few are generally "squatters," who locate themselves upon the borders of the prairies—live in miserable cabins, frequently without floors or windows, and exhibiting the most conclusive evidence of the habitual indolence and negligence of the occupants, whose personal appearance is but little better than that of the savage tribes, who are their neighbors. We have lodged one or two nights among these people, and find ourselves exceedingly annoyed by myriads of fleas, bed-bugs, &c.

June 25th, 1825, we last night put up at the cabin of a Southern emigrant. Our supper consisted of—a plate of fried smoked pork, a cup of sour curdled milk, several small Indian cakes, something like a tea-cup in size and form—and which are here called "dodgers," and a plate of honey. The table furniture consisted of a Spanish dirk, for a knife a fork, one or two brown earthen plates, and one or two tin pint cups. I find that this is the usual fare for breakfast, dinner and supper, with few exceptions, throughout this section of country.

During the night of the 24<sup>th</sup>, a heavy thunder-shower passed over;—the rain descended in torrents within the cabin where we lodged, as well as without. Finding ourselves much annoyed by the rain, which poured upon our bed in large streams, I sprang up, and attempted to remove our bed, by drawing the bedstead to a part of the room which seemed better sheltered by the roof, but the effort was in vain—I found it im-

## CHAPTER IV.

### "VERMILLION SALINE."

COAL AND SALT—GAME AND SNAKES—  
WHY THE INDIANS ABANDONED THE  
WABASH—HIS HORSE GIVES OUT.

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On the 27th, of June I visited the salt manufactory on the banks of the Vermillion river. These works are situated about twelve miles west of the Wabash, and eighteen miles from the mouth of the Vermillion. The manufactory is yet conducted on a small scale; perhaps yielding 100 bushels per week. There is but one arch, of 20 kettles,—and the water is obtained from wells of 15 or 20 feet depth. Its saltiness, I should judge from taste, to be about the same as sea water. This water is found immediately below a layer of copperas stone and stone coal, and is said to be obtained by digging for 20 miles along the banks of the river. An enterprising individual by the name of Whitcomb, formerly of Phelps, in Ontario county, N. Y., has for some time been engaged in boring for water of greater strength than is now obtained from the wells. He informed me that he had penetrated about 400 feet in rock; that he has found that the water at that depth is much stronger than near the surface. He is still engaged in boring, and has great confidence that he shall soon find water in great quantity and value. Several large wells and reservoirs have recently been sunk at a hundred rods distance from the present works. In digging them, they found the same strata of coal about ten feet below the surface, as at the old works. In fact coal abounds in this region. It is found in the banks of

rivers, and even in the immense prairies, I have noticed it. This will furnish the country with fuel when the small portion of timber which grows in this state, shall fail.

The Vermillion river is a beautiful stream of clear water. It takes its rise in the "Grand Prairie," and running a south-easterly course for 40 or 50 miles, falls into the Wabash. This stream is boatable to the salt works. Above the Saline it divides in three parts, and has some fine mill seats. Fish in great numbers are every where swimming in its waters. Some of them of 15 or 20 pounds weight. Along the banks of the Vermillion in many places, I saw ledges of excellent stone for building and other purposes, and banks of copperas stone, inexhaustible in quantity.

There are few inhabitants in this quarter. Many townships have not as yet a single family. The country for a great extent, seems to be new. Game is abundant. The forests are filled with deer, and the prairies with turkeys and prairie-hens; prairie wolves and opossums are numerous. Of reptiles, they have rattle-snakes, of two kinds, large and small; black-snakes, copper heads, and the glass snake. The latter is a curiosity. Upon striking a slight blow with a small stick, it will generally break into several pieces.

The timbered lands here border the streams and water courses. Every creek is lined with valuable timber from half-a-mile to two miles in width, and generally extending from its mouth to its source. An astonishing growth of vegetation is also every where prevalent, except in the dry prairies, where the wild grass holds the ascendancy. This

wild grass in the dry prairie grows thick at the bottom, but not more than two feet high; but in the wet prairies the grass and weeds grow to the height of seven or eight feet, and so thick and close as to impede the progress of a horse, and thus rendering traveling slow and disagreeable. I have observed that on the western edges or borders of all the large prairies a thick growth of young timber is springing up, whereas on their eastern borders no under brush is found within many rods of the open lands. This is undoubtedly caused by fire divisions by those westerly winds which prevail in October and November, when these immense plains are annually burnt over. The heat and fury of the flames driven by a westerly wind far into the timbered lands on the opposite sides destroying the under-growth of timber, and every year increasing the extent of prairie in that direction, has no doubt, for many centuries added to the quantity of open land found throughout this part of America.

June 28th, I spent this day in exploring and examining the country near the Vermillion. Prairies of unknown extent spread to the west. The plains, with or without timber, are alike in the surprising richness and fertility of their soils. The few inhabitants in this quarter who have fields of wheat, are now harvesting. Their crops are as good in quality and quantity as grow in New York. Flax and oats grow here equal to any produced in any eastern state; corn is almost spontaneous, and cotton, indigo, and sweet potatoes, are cultivated. The extensive prairies here, covered with blossoms a great part of the year, are peculiarly favorable for

bees, and as might be expected, the timbered lands are filled with them. Wild honey is of course abundant, and every inhabitant easily obtains a supply. The Indians were numerous on the Wabash, until recently, —but it seems they have abandoned their country on the approach of the whites. It is said that a singular circumstance hastened them away. A trader employed a steam boat to ascend the Wabash with merchandize. Several hundred Indians, having heard that a huge vessel which emitted fire and smoke, was ascending the river, and stemminig its strong current without either oars or sails, collected at their lower towns to witness the phenomenon. Upon its approach these sons of the forest watched its motion with fearful admiration. The boat was about to anchor, and accordingly, the steam was let off. The loud hissing noise thus produced, alarmed the natives. They instantly took to their heels, and fled in consternation and dismay; hundreds of them pressing tremulously up the river, to escape from the horrible steam engine; and it is affirmed that they never recovered from the panic thus created, until they abandoned the country.

June 29th, My horse having failed, I was obliged to leave him at the Vermillion, at which place I hired another to perform the remaining part of my journey west. During this day I rode southwardly in the Grand Prairie upwards of thirty miles. The heat was excessive, and prairie flies assailed my horse as if they would destroy him. These flies are not found in timbered lands, and I found it necessary to avoid the open country as much as possible,

In the course of the day one or two cabins were seen and I passed a few cultivated fields of corn and wheat without any kind of fence or enclosure. Near the borders of the timbered lands, immense numbers of wild turkeys, deer, &c., were feeding.

June 30th. I continued a southerly course, and passed through Paris and Darwin to York, on the Wabash. These are here called villages. They are county seats, and contain from five to ten log cabins, each. In the afternoon I reached Allisot's prairie - a tract 10 or 12 miles long and three wide. It is well settled; the corn fields are fenced. The soil is a deep black sand, of infinite fertility, and there is a greater growth of corn than I have ever seen hitherto. I measured many stalks more than 16 feet in height. The face of the country is delightful; but the inhabitants generally agree that all the sand prairies are unhealthy. These prairies are too level. No undulations or swells, but a perfect level for an immense extent, like the smooth surface of the ocean. No rapid streams or currents of clear water, but a few dead muddy brooks or creeks. The finest fields of corn, wheat, cotton, sweet potatoes, &c., are found here. Wheat is generally harvested, here for this season.

July 1st, I rode to Union Prairie. At this place are some grist mills constructed with inclined wheels and carried by the weight of oxen. An object of curiosity which attracted my notice is found here. It is a plough used in ditching the flat lands in this quarter, and from an accurate measurement which I have taken I find its dimensions as follows,

VIZ:

Length of beam . . . . .	12 feet
do " chip . . . . .	4 " 8 in
do " handles . . . . .	10 "
Size of the beam . . . . .	8 by 6
do " chip . . . . .	10 by 8
do " handles . . . . .	4 by 4
Height f'm bottom chip to top beam	2 feet 8
Plow has 2 turf cutters 22 inches apart w'g 60	lbs
Plowshare (say) . . . . .	110 "
Bolt and other irons . . . . .	80 "

Pounds of iron . . . . . 250 "

Its usual furrow is 22 inches wide and 18 inches deep. Twelve yoke of oxen usually draw this plow and two men hold it. This is truly a mammoth plow.

July 2nd, I continued a southerly course - passed through Palestine, and onwards ever so recent the Emory's river or the Shaker Mts. (here called the Autr. river). This stream was too deep or broad with safety, and with much difficulty I hired a man to lash two canoes together and ferry me across. After passing the river, I again entered a flat and open country, and followed obscure traces in a south-western direction until dark without finding a house. At this time I was attempting to cross a low marshy plain, which for ten miles in length and two in width was covered with water from six inches to two feet deep, and grass six feet in height. I soon lost the trace or path, in which I entered this marsh, but continued to urge my horse forward for two or three hours without the least appearance of finding dry land, and apprehending that I had lost the true course, as the evening was clouded. I at length gave up the hope of extricating myself from my unpleasant situation before morning. I halted, but it was impossible to dismount without sinking knee-deep in water, and drawing my great-coat around me, I endeavored to protect

myself from the cold and damp chills of night and the noxious exhalations of the morass, with which I was surrounded. After having remained an hour in this situation attentively listening to every sound, the distant barking of a dog was heard. No music which I had ever heard was so delightful or enlivening as the hoarse howl which resounded through these plains and which now saluted my ears. Instantly directing my course to the sound, I had the gratification to reach dry land within a mile, and soon found the cabin of an Irish emigrant.

Upon approaching the cabin, several large dogs came furiously toward me, and one of them, in particular, was so daring, that I found it necessary to halt. The owner of the mansion was aroused, and after having silenced his dogs, very hospitably offered me such accommodations as he was able to give, and which I certainly felt grateful in receiving, under the circumstances in which I was then placed. On reaching his cabin, I found it to be the very abode of poverty itself. The cabin was built of small poles—about 12 feet square—so low that I was unable to stand erect; without any other floor than the earth,—was covered with bark, instead of shingles, and entirely without a chimney or a window of any kind. The door or entrance was closed by setting split plank on end on the inside. This establishment has sheltered a family during the last three years, consisting of the man, his wife and seven children. With in the house there is neither bedstead, chair or table, a long bench serving for the latter.

The man of the house was a small, ill-shapen, withered Irishman; the woman a perfect gipsey, tall, lank, and lantern jawed, with long flowing black hair, and with a skin which seemed to have been smoked, until she had the hue of a tartar or a creole. One of their children was sick at this time, and all of them were almost entirely destitute of clothes, altho' some of them were girls of 10, 12 or 14 years of age. Having been without refreshment from morning, and feeling much exhausted and hungry, I inquired for something to eat—but their poverty in this particular, corresponded with their situation in other respects. They had neither bread, flour, meal, meat, butter, nor cheese.—and were only able to furnish me a cup of sour milk, of which I partook, and lay down upon an old mat spread upon the ground in front of the fire, but it was impossible to sleep—fleas innumerable, kept me in torment until daylight, when I again mounted my horse and pursued my journey after paying “mine host” a half dollar for his accommodations.

July 3rd, during the day of the 3rd, I rode about 40 miles towards Vaudalia, sometimes pursuing the obscure paths made by Indian travel, and sometimes, directing my course without regarding any former tract, through an open and perfectly level country. A few habitations only seen excepting on the banks of the Little Wabash, which I this day passed.

On the 4th day of July I pursued my journey at a very early hour, and before 8 o'clock a. m., was compelled to stop and shelter my horse from the prairie

flies, with which he was assailed in such numbers that two hours longer of exposure, would invertably have destroyed him. It was near the center of an immense prairie at the habitation of a Yankee, who four years since, accompanied by his wife, also from the land of "steady habits," selected this spot where an "island" of beautiful timber containing a few acres, was the only obstruction to a view of at least 12 miles of open country on all sides. His nearest neighbors are 12 miles distant—and from the nature of the surrounding lands it will be long before any person will locate their habitations nearer. This circumstance, determined him as he informed me, to select this spot as his residence. He is now in possession of the whole range, undisturbed by friends or foes. He has accumulated a stock of 50 horses, 200 head of cattle, 100 hogs and 100 sheep, and has about 300 hives of bees. He has one inconvenience however to meet, of a serious nature, and that is the want of good water. Water is found at all times in some sink holes near by, but it is unfit for use. This man is now engaged in digging a well. At six feet he struck a soft sand-stone, and has penetrated 47 feet in it without the slightest indications of finding water.

At this place I spent the anniversary of our independence, dependent on myself for shelter and shade, from the intense rays of the sun during the day. At sunset I again pursued a westerly direction until a late hour at night I reached the border of this immense prairie, and found inhabitants, where I halted, having rode in the night about 15 miles. At an early hour I pursued

my way on the 5th, and arrived at Vandalia before noon. The road for three miles east of Vandalia is at this time impassable with wagons, and nearly so on horseback. It is a perfect marsh or swamp, of soft clay, extremely tenacious, into which a horse will sink at every step to his knees, and for the whole distance covered with water to the depth of six or eight inches.

July 5th, Vandalia is the present seat of government of the state of Illinois. It is situated in Fayette county, upon the western bank of the Kaskaskia river, and in population and elegance of its buildings is inferior to the village of Bethel or Rushville, in New York. The surrounding country is much of it hard and sterile, covered with stunted oaks and apparently unproductive. In my opinion its location was injudicious and consequently, I think that it can never be a place of much importance.

July 6th, I directed my course south-erly, and during the day was excessively annoyed by the prairie flies. The country through which I passed is principally prairie, but many inhabitants are settled upon the borders. I have within a few days noticed several instances of a most singular method invented for the purpose of protecting horses and oxen while at work upon the plains, from the swarms of flies which assail them. A tin kettle which may hold 16 or 18 quarts, is suspended from the neck of the beast, and a smoke constantly kept up by burning cobs in the kettle. Here also I saw a bull harnessed with the common dutch collar—bits in his mouth, and a single line to guide him. Thus harnessed, his owner was plowing out his corn regardless of heat or flies.

July 7th, The last 150 miles of my journey has been through a tract of country which is certainly unhealthy, and the sickly season has already commenced. A pale, sallow, cadaverous countenance is almost universal, among the inhabitants. The blooming, buxom, animated, and animating appearance of the ladies, so common in the eastern states, is not seen here. A ghastly, yellow complexion and enervated frame indicate the insalubrity of the climate. The rivers here are at this time without any perceptible current. Their waters of a muddy color, and the noxious exhalations which arise during the heats of summer, from them, overspread the country, rendering the atmosphere poisonous and impure.

On approaching within a few miles of Kaskaskia, I find the country becoming more broken and sterile. Some limestone ledges are here observable and many sink holes are scattered over the plains. Into one of these I descended. It was probably of more than 100 feet depth. About ten feet from its lowest point a small stream of clear cold water rushes in, but disappears among the crevices of the limestone rock at bottom. This sink hole is exactly circular and at its top may be six rods in diameter, terminating in a point at bottom. I this day reached Kaskaskia, crossing the river at a ferry directly east of the town. This is an ancient French settlement. It is situated on the western margin of the Kaskaskia river, five miles above its mouth—and two and a half miles east of the Mississippi. Its site is level and low. At this time the waters of the river are nearly of the same elevation. The buildings here are with few ex-

ceptions, old and decaying. In population I should think that it might equal Geneva, in New York state. It seems to have little business, enterprise or industry. Here is to be seen every color known among the human species, and I am assured that black, white, and all the intermediate grades inter-marry. The lower classes exhibit the most conclusive evidences of wretchedness. Even in the village there are inhabited dwellings constructed by driving four posts into the earth—boarding up the sides, and making a roof of boards and slabs; the inmates are half-clad and filthy:

Black spirits and white  
Blue spirits and gray,  
Mingle, mingle, mingle,  
They that mingle, may.

There is however a class of the population who will hold a respectable rank in community. The established inhabitants, whose property is such as to enable them to acquire a good education, and to live in good style, are generally such.

July 8th, I this day crossed the mystic "Mother of Waters," and entered the state of Missouri. The river Mississippi is a stream of wonderful magnitude. At this time it runs with a powerful current for a mile or more in width, filling its banks, and in many places overspreading the bottoms, and inundating immense tracts of country. Many of the corn plantations, in this vicinity are now under water and the river is still rising. The rise at this time is caused by the "Missouri Fresh," which it seems has just reached this latitude. There is one circumstance relative to the Mississippi, which I do not remember to have seen noticed, by any

writer, and which shows the astonishing magnitude of this stream, and the prodigious extent of country from which its waters flow. Below the mouth of the Ohio, there are three distinct annual floods. First the Ohio Fresh pours down its waters in the month of May, and it principally subsides about the first of June. Soon after the first of June the floods of the Mississippi proper, swell the current of the stream, which again falls—before the "Missouri Fresh" from the Rocky Mountains reaches this latitude, which is usually in July. The Missouri flood pours down with much greater volume and velocity than those of the Ohio, or the Mississippi. At this time the plantations below Kaskaska, and upon the banks of the river are inundated; and it is perfectly apparent that with the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri floods united at the same time, the river would be swelled to a magnitude which would overflow the surrounding country from hill to hill, and sweep the beautiful plantations on its banks to ruin.

## CHAPTER V.

### MISSOURI.

ITS INHABITANTS—GRAPE VINES—1200 MILES FROM HOME—THE START BACK—A FALLEN METOR.

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St. Genevive, upon the western bank of the Mississippi, is an old settlement very similar in appearance to Kaskaskia. Its population is less than that village, but very similar in character. Black white, and all the intermediate grades promiseoously connected.

July 9th, I spent this day in viewing the country and ranged several miles from the river towards the lead mines, but without observing any thing unusual except the immense growth of grape vines, which among some parts of the timbered lands load every tree and connect whole forests. The principal part of the inhabitants here are a miserable race. Every man of property owns slaves, and nearly all the labor done is by them. Nothing like enterprise or industry is observable here. The same unexhaustible fertility of soil as in Illinois prevails, and the same unhealthly atmosphere produces sickness and disease, which now exists throughout this country.

July 10th, My course is no longer westerly. I this day commence my return, and recross the riyer. At a distance of more than 1200 miles from home, in a sickly country, among strangers, and in the most sultry season of the year, the apprehensions of sickness or disaster force upon the mind the most unpleasant sensations. But with good health and good resolution I trust I shall be able to

meet the hardships and inconveniences which are unavoidable.

From the 10th to the 15th, I pursued a north-westerly course, through a rich open country, in which is a few scattered habitations. Here are no beaten roads. The only paths are the ancient traces of the Indians. In traversing this tract of country I have been exceedingly annoyed by prairie flies; have suffered much from heat, and the want of water. The few inhabitants generally use what is called "Branch Water" in the language of the country; that is water obtained from the brooks and creeks. This might be tolerable if the brooks contained running water; but such is rarely the case at this season; most of them have ceased to run, and water is obtained from the deepest holes, where it stands stagnant, and filled with every thing noxious and offensive.

In the section of country which I have traversed within the last five days the few inhabitants residing are almost without exception, Southern emigrants. Many peculiarities are observable among them. Their plantations are generally located on the edge of the prairies. They commonly enclose a field of corn of from ten to thirty acres and which is the only enclosure they have. Their cabins are miserable log buildings, placed in open commons, generally from 50 to 100 rods distant from their corn-fields. Every man owns an excellent rifle, and has from three to five dogs. Appurtenant to every house is a log smoke house, in which all their meat is smoked,—a hovel or stable to shelter their horses from the flies, and two or three corn cribs which will hold from

500 to 1000 bushels each. Their bread is made of corn meal in a manner very similar to the New England "Jonny cake." The small loaves thus baked, they denominate "dodgers." These they eat with butter and honey; usually a tin pint cup filled with sour, curdled, milk, is placed before each one at table, and dodgers, fried smoked pork, sour milk, butter and honey, commonly constitutes their meal at morning, noon, and night. The emigrants from different states have each their local designation. Thus the Virginians are called "Tuckehoes," the North Carolinians, "Buckskins," the South Carolinians, "Brown Backs," and the New Englanders, "New Yorkers," Jerseymen and Pennsylvanians are all "Yankees."

On the 16th, I reached the "Vermillion Saline," in the vicinity of which I remained until the 22nd, inst. While making an excursion eastwardly from the Saline on the 18th, at the distance of two or three miles from the works, and in an extensive plain, I discovered a most singular and remarkable curiosity. Upon the surface of the ground is a body of stone, clay, iron pyrites, and melted sand, or glass, with some other substances—equal in bulk to a commoncock of hay,—and weighing probably more than 1500 pounds. The whole mass has evidently been subjected to the action of fire. It is not solid, but is loose, spongy, and porous, and exhibits the appearance of various substances having been exposed to an intense heat, and when in a state of partial fusion, promiscuously thrown together, half melted—and in that state having hardened by cooking, so firmly as to have adhered in one mass when it fell or was

thrown to this place; for it is perfectly evident that it must have been thrown or have fallen here;—and yet there are no hills or elevated land within many miles from which it can have fallen or have been thrown by the force of volcanic fires; nor is there any evidence of any extraordinary fire ever having existed here. Notwithstanding its weight and bulk, it was but slightly embedded in the earth, and I succeeded in rolling it from its bed. Grass, leaves, and decayed vegetables were under it. There is not probably within two miles any coal, iron ore, clay, or even a pebble stone of the smallest size. How then came this body here? After the most careful examination which I have been able to make, I have come to the conclusion that this is one of those meteoric stones, which sometimes fall to the earth, and that this must have fallen within two or three years past.

On the 22nd, of July, I traveled a north eastwardly course, and near night reached the Wabash river, and on the 23rd and 24th, continued to ascend its left bank, until I arrived at Tippecanoe, famous for the bloody battle fought here in 1811, between the American Army, commanded by General Harrison, and the combined Indian tribes who then inhabited this quarter. The country here is mostly open; prairies of great extent spread from the Wabash—glades of beautiful timber are occasionally interspersed,—and it was upon one of the most pleasant and delightful spots which I have ever seen, that this sanguinary conflict took place. Between the Wabash and Tippecanoe, about a mile from the entrance of the latter stream into the former the state of

battle raged, and the exulting war-hoop of the savage warrior resounded. But it is now silent and peaceful; the savage has disappeared, and civilized man has not as yet established himself in his place.

On the night of the 23rd, I rested in an extensive prairie, without fire or any kind of shelter. The country is uninhabited except occasionally a squatter upon the banks of the Wabash.

On the 24th, I entered the state of Indiana. I find it necessary to bear to the south for the purpose of finding inhabitants, and I have determined to direct my course for Crawfordsville. Prairies are no longer seen—a dense forest overspreads the country.

July 26th, I this day reached Crawfordsville about noon. It is a small village of log houses,—and the inhabitants seem to be industrious. The place is quite new,—and probably not more than 50 acres is yet cleared of timber.

In the afternoon of July 26th, I went on towards Thorntown, and at night struck up a fire and lodged in the wilderness, and near the banks of Sugar Creek. In the night I saw a brilliant light, resembling a flambeau. It seemed to approach slowly by following the winding course of the creek. For a few moments I was much startled, but I soon perceived that it was in reality a flambeau carried by an Indian, who was wading down the creek on a night hunt, I had previously been informed that at this season of the year the hunters follow the creeks or float down them in canoes—and shoot the deer which are in the habit of standing in the waters at night. The Indian passed on and was

soon out of view. At an early hour on the 27th, I went on, and arrived at Thorntown in the forenoon. Here I lost the trace, and for some hours was in great perplexity. The Indians of this settlement were all absent, and from the squaws, who remained, it was impossible to obtain the least information. They furnished me however, with some corn for my horse and some victuals for myself, upon my offering them money and making signs of wanting refreshment. After an ineffectual search of more than three hours for the trace or path which leads from this place to the head of White river, I gave up the attempt, and returned to the lodge—and endeavored once more to make the stupid wretches understand my wishes. I succeeded at length in hiring them to point out the place where the path enters the forest—and pressing forward with diligence until evening. I encamped probably 18 or 20 miles east of Thorntown. Having built a fire, I tied my horse to a sapling near, wrapped myself in my coat, and lay down. About midnight I was aroused by the jumping and snorting of my horse. He seemed to have his eye upon something in a northern direction, and was extremely frightened. The night was very dark; upon listening I could distinctly hear the foot steps of something as well as the rustling of bushes in that direction, apparently fifteen or twenty rods distant,—and I was soon convinced that it was approaching. I had ever cherished a confidence in my own personal courage, and that I could meet any necessary danger with fortitude and resolution; but now they were put to the test; and I must admit that I was here excessively disconcerted and

alarmed. My first impressions were that I had been followed by Indians, and plunder was their object. I hastily primed my pistols anew, and advanced a few paces into the shade of the thicket and listened. The occasional crackling of brush was still heard, and was still approaching; its approach was slow, but it was now evidently within ten rods of my fire, which was burning brightly, giving light nearly that distance into the forest on all sides. At this moment I hallooed loudly, at the same time discharging one of my pistols; a wild animal of some kind gave a sniff or snort, and bounded off in an eastern direction, and I presume was heard distinctly for more than forty rods, and my horse in his fright broke his halter, but was caught without difficulty, and the remainder of the night was spent without sleep.

July 28th, At daylight I went onward, and near night found inhabitants on the banks of the White river. During the last two days I have suffered extremely from thirst—not having seen a drop of water in traveling fifty miles, excepting in two places where trees were turned out by the roots in clay, grounds and rain water had settled in. Had I anticipated so much trouble as I have encountered for the last seventy miles in the wilderness, I should have preferred a circuit of 200 miles to avoid it.

August 1st, From the 28th, of July to the first of August nothing important occurred. On the 30th of July I entered Ohio—passed through Piqua, and on the 31st, Urbana. These are flourishing villages,—superior to any I have seen in this state except Zanesville and Columbus. A heavy rain set in and

continued through the day. The roads were rendered miry, and the swamps filled with water—and as the country is new, and principally unsettled, the traveling is tedious and fatiguing. From Urbana my route was easterly through Milford and Delaware,—thence north through Norton, Clarendon, Bucyrus, New Haven, Monroeville to Portland or Sandusky City, on the lake.

Aug. 2nd, Delaware is a beautiful and flourishing village, and is the capital of the county of the same name. Clarendon is situated on Whetstone Creek, and is near the summit level, or dividing ridge which separates the waters which flow into the lake from those which fall into the Ohio in this state. The history of this village is a melancholy evidence of the inability and unhealthiness of this country.

Aug. 4th, About four years since a village was projected on Whetstone Creek, and called Clarendon. Its site was pleasant and beautiful. On the borders of the immense plains which extend from east to west nearly through the state of Ohio. On one side a heavy forest of fine timber; on another, open plains level as far as the eye can reach—with occasional groves of timber interspersed—and upon another, a small but clear and durable stream of water—this village was located. Great expectations were had and great efforts were made by the proprietors, and during one or two seasons much labor was done and money expended. About 30 or 40 families had settled here in high hope and expectation of wealth, but the hand of Providence has fallen heavily upon them. Sickness assailed them; disease in its most fatal forms, swept off its popula-

tion. The houses were depopulated and those who survived disease, fled from the fatal spot. At this time the melancholy spectacle is exhibited of a village beautifully situated; laid out with taste—and embellished with art, but no longer the abode of man; a solitary family remain, and from their pale and haggard countenances, I should judge that the hand of death was already raised to strike its last victim here. The site of this village will soon be lost in the rising growth of the forest; and such I am afraid is the history of many of the projected villages in this section of country.

Aug. 6th, From Clarendon my course was northerly across the plains to Bucyrus. The soil of these plains is clay. Glades country is level—"Sag Holes" abound, in which the waters settle and gradually dry away in the heats of summer, rendering the atmosphere impure with the most noxious and unwholesome exhalations.

From the 6th, to the 15th, of August, I progressed on my journey, generally travelling the ridge road. Portland on the lake is a flourishing place. Monroeville, Norwalk, Illyria, &c., are new but thriving villages. On the morning of August 10th, a tremendous thunder shower hung over the lake for several hours. The streams of lightning were frequent and uncommonly vivid—and the peals of thunder were unusually heavy and appalling. The sound of thunder is undoubtedly greater over large bodies of water than when passing over land; and at this time the view was grand and sublime. A vessel under sail was on the lake, distant a few miles from shore. It seemed to pass under

the black masses of clouds which hung over the western part of the horizon and suddenly was lost to the view. Cleveland is a fine village—is rapidly growing into importance, as is also Erie, in Pennsylvania. The enterprize and industry of the inhabitants is apparent in this quarter.

On the 15th, of August I again entered the State of New York, and on the 18th, reached Buffalo; remaining at this place two days, I again pursued my journey via. Lockport and Batavia, and arrived home on the 24th, of August, 1825, after having traversed an immense extent of country and endured many hardships and privations within a period of about three months.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SOME CONCLUSIONS FORMED FROM THE OBSERVATIONS ON THE TRIP.

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In taking a retrospective view of the country which I have traversed during the tour just completed, the conviction cannot be resisted that it is distinguished by features of a striking and peculiar character. The inquisitive mind will involuntarily be led to indulge in speculations and conjectures, with respect to the causes which have produced those features and from which those peculiar characteristics may in the lapse of ages have arisen.

Without pretending to go into a critical inquiry or examination of the subject, for which I am fully sensible that I am altogether incompetent and unequal, I nevertheless propose to give my impressions as formed from the most deliberate consideration which I have been enabled to bestow upon it; and in doing this I shall state the theory which I have embraced and the reasons which have led me to its adoption. The leading views only can be given. A volume would not be sufficient to contain a full and detailed view of every consideration attached to the subject proposed briefly for examination, I have adopted the following views, viz:

1st. That at some remote period, the whole tract of country extending in length from the Gulf of Mexico to the Icy Sea, and in width from the Allegany to the Rocky Mountains, was the bed of the ocean;

2nd. That the ocean when it receded, receded suddenly to its present boundaries;

3rd. That the waters of that immense chain of lakes, west of the Niagara

River, once flowed through the valleys of the Illinois, and the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico;

4th. That by some tremendous convulsion of nature, the mountain ridge separating Lakes Erie and Ontario, became broken and the current of the waters of the upper lakes was thereby reversed.

With regard to the first position, viz: That at some remote period the whole tract of country, extending in length from the Gulf of Mexico to the Icy Sea and in width from the Allegany to the Rocky Mountains, was the bed of the ocean. It may be observed :

That the whole face of country within these bounds is nearly level. Occasionally a small inequality of surface is found, and every elevation of ground or ridge of fifty or a hundred feet in height, is composed of coarse gravel, smooth pebble stones, or marine shells, I think evidently deposited by long continued currents of water—while the intermediate country—between these elevations is entirely alluvial,—resembling precisely that kind of land found on the flats of rivers which annually overflow and deposit the sediment of their waters. Alternate layers of fine and coarse sand may be seen from the surface to the depth of several feet. The plains are entirely destitute of small stone. Sand stone, lime stone, and slate are sometimes found in the ridges and—the banks of rivers—and upon the prairies in the northern parts of Illinois and Missouri, scattered here and there an isolated rock of a peculiar kind is seen. It is said that a similar kind of stone is not found nearer than Iceland, Greenland, or the shores of the Icy Sea. Did these rocks come from those regions? It

is known that immense ice-bergs break off from the shores of those countries and frequently with large rocks imbedded in them—are floated by the currents of the ocean at the present period, to the latitude of 40 or 45 degrees on the Atlantic. The glaciers of the Norwegian Alps and the immense masses of ice which annually accumulate upon the sunmits of the mountains of Iceland and Greenland descend in frightful avalanches into the deep abyss of waters with which they are surrounded and carried by the currents which are known to exist into lower latitudes are gradually dissolved in a warmer atmosphere, scattering over the bed of the ocean, where the masses dissolve; the rocks and stones thus borne from the mountains where they were formed. Such we know to be fact at the present period; and who will undertake to say that similar operations of the laws of nature did not take place in the earlier ages of the world.

With respect to the 2nd, position, viz: "That the ocean when it receded, receded suddenly to its present boundaries;" It is only necessary to observe that almost all the ridges and elevations of land between the Allegany and Rocky Mountains run in a direction from North to South. These were formed I apprehend by the prevailing currents of the ocean. If the waters had gradually receded and at long intervals of time ridges and embankments running in a direction from East to West would undoubtedly have been formed by the action of the waves. Such not being found, the inference to my mind is conclusive that if the ocean ever overspread

this part of the western continent, its waters suddenly receded to their present boundaries.

3rdly. "The waters of that immense chain of lakes west of the Niagara River, once flowed southerly through the valley of the Illinois and Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico." Is this possible? The subject offers an interesting field of inquiry.

4thly, It has been an acknowledged observation of Geographers that rivers and streams which empty themselves into lakes, generally point in the direction they run towards the out-let of the lakes into which they respectively fall.

[THE END.]



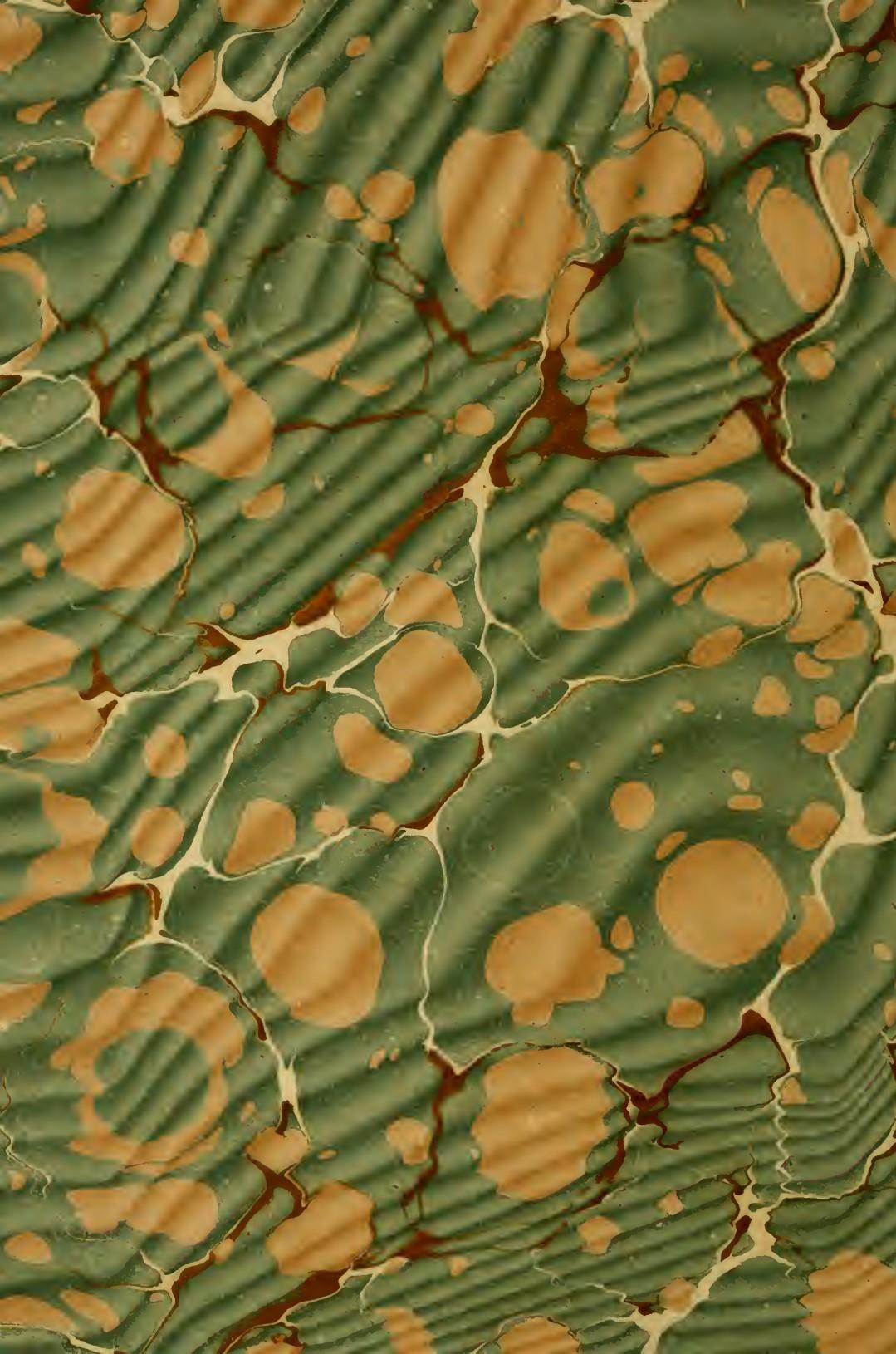


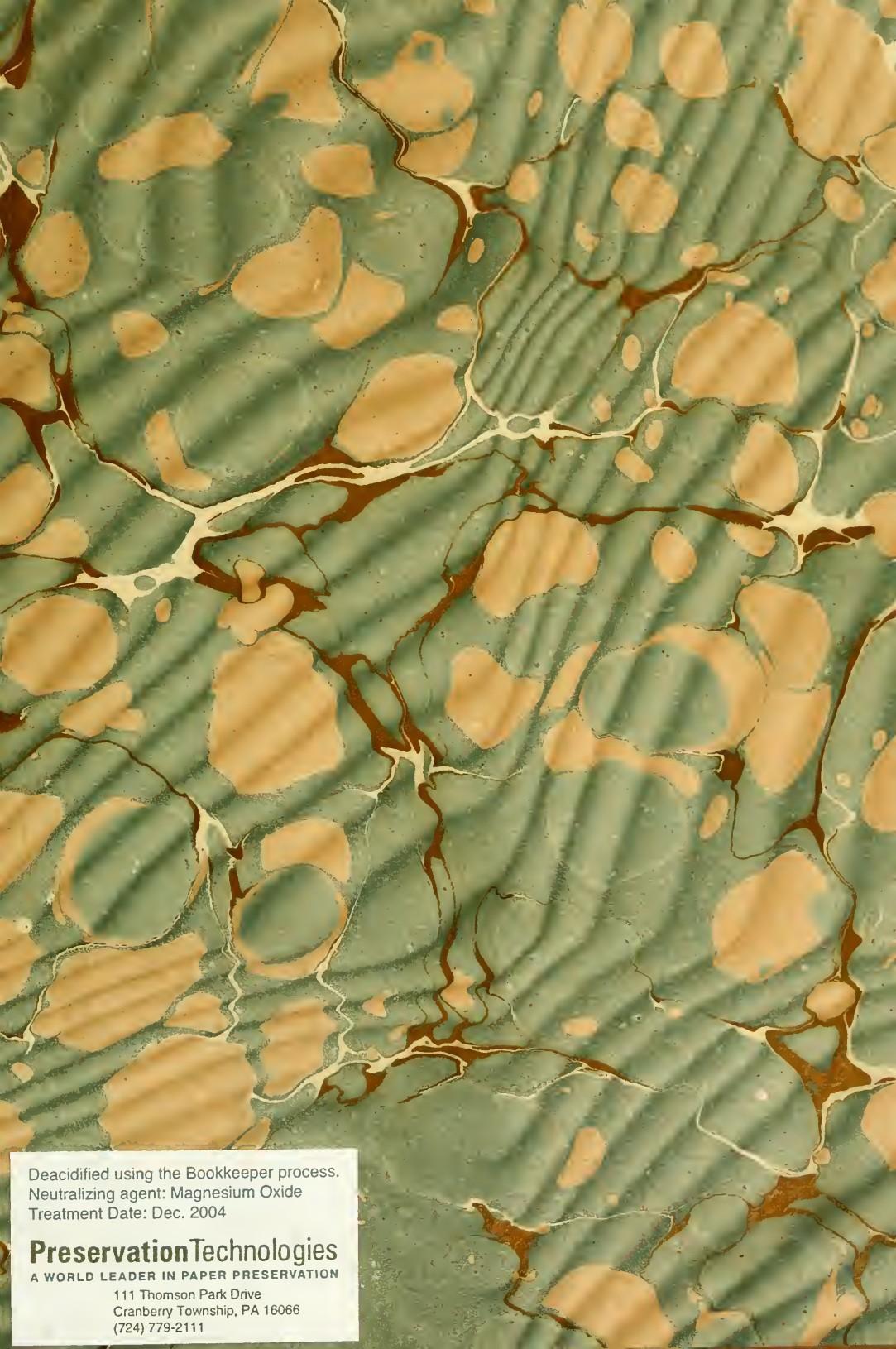












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